

Testimony of Ed Woods to the California Air Resources Board
April 26, 2007

Good morning. My name is Ed Woods. I am an Exec VP at Columbia Forest Products. I have been working in the hardwood plywood industry for over 30 years, mostly in sales and marketing roles.

I want to assure the board that California is moving in the right direction with this regulation. The demand for formaldehyde-free building products is already growing dramatically throughout N. American markets. And currently, there are at least 4 non-UF resin technologies available to all plywood producers – that are already Phase 2 compliant for veneer core hardwood plywood.

During 2002, green building programs began to emerge, the most notable now being LEED. At that time, we started seeing customers specifying “urea formaldehyde-free” or “no-added UF” hardwood plywood panels for specific jobs. Most commonly, this started out in commercial casework but quickly expanded into other sectors such as laboratory furniture and cabinetry for hospitals and schools. Green building initiatives are now expanding rapidly into residential construction.

The emergence of LEED and other green building programs in late 2002 predated the development of our PureBond, soy technology. During 2003 and 2004, those projects were completed (as specified) with the use of other Non-UF resin systems, namely PVA - and combinations of PVA + Phenolic resins in a 2-step process. These are mature resin technologies, available today to all producers. (In fact, at least 1 of our largest engineered flooring competitors, Mannington, uses PVA exclusively in a preference over UF.)

In 2005, we began the commercialization of PureBond and have now successfully converted all 7 of our N.American plywood operations to this UF-free resin technology. In the recent weeks we have offered to license this patented resin technology to others in the hardwood plywood industry, and are currently in discussions with two manufacturers. In addition, we are now offering to sell PureBond veneer core blanks to

competing stock panel manufacturers , and have already started shipping these PureBond blanks to smaller architectural plywood producers.

Subsequent to PureBond's commercialization, at least one major competitor, Timber Products, is now advertising its own "No-added UF" hardwood plywood line, utilizing yet another soy resin system offered by Hexion.

So now, there are at least 4 different non-UF resin approaches FOR HARDWOOD PLYWOOD, all available in the marketplace today and all are phase 2 compliant for veneer core construction.

The CARB staff also recognizes this, and has appropriately moved phase 2 implementation for veneer core hardwood plywood forward to January, 2010. We predict that the emission testing data that CARB will be collecting following implementation will further motivate you to continue to strengthen this regulation.

On behalf of our employee-owned company, we enthusiastically support this proposed regulation and we ask the board to pass the control measure (before you today) to limit formaldehyde emissions from composite woods, including hardwood plywood.